# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# RAILWAYS
# LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:264
ANSWERED ON:16.03.2016
Catering Services in Railways
Choudhary Shri Ram Tahal;Giluwa Shri Laxman

**Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Railways has formulated any catering policy, particularly with regard to long distance and premium trains;
(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
(c) the nature and number of complaints received from passengers during the last one year, particularly relating to long distance and premium trains about poor quality of catering services;
(d) the follow-up action taken thereon; and
(e) the corrective measures initiated to improve catering in the Railways along with action taken against the erring officers/ agencies during the last one year?

## Answer

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 264 BY SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA AND SHRI RAM TAHAL CHOUDHARY TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 16.03.2016 REGARDING CATERING SERVICES IN RAILWAYS

(a) & (b): Catering services in long distance and premium trains are being provided in accordance with the provisions of Catering Policy, 2010. However, in pursuit of Railways' objective to provide quality food of different variety to passengers, it has been announced in Rail Budget 2016-17 that Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) would begin to manage catering services in a phased manner. It has also been decided that IRCTC would unbundle catering services by creating a distinction between food preparation and food distribution. The other important announcements made in this year's Budget Speech inter-alia include addition of 10 IRCTC operated mechanized and sophisticated base kitchens, extension of e-catering services from existing 45 large stations to all 'A-1' and 'A' class stations, introduction of multi-purpose stalls at stations and exploring the possibility of making mandatory catering services optional in trains. To ensure the desired level of quality in catering services, third party audit has been mandated in the Budget pronouncement. Enforcement of reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Women, Divyang etc in catering and other minor units has been stipulated in the Budget. For women empowerment, a sub-quota of 33% for women in each of the reserved categories has also been announced along with giving weightage to district domicile holders for commercial licenses at Railway station. Announcement has also been made in the Rail Budget to ensure availability of children's menu items including baby food, hot milk and hot water in trains as well as at stations.

(c) & (d): 4969 complaints related to catering services in long distance and premium trains have been reported during the last year (i.e. 01.01.2015 to 31.12.2015). Actions taken on defaulting licensees during this period, inter-alia, include warning in 1203 cases, imposition of fines in 2321 cases and termination of contracts in 01 case, depending on the gravity of the offence.

(e): Corrective measures taken to improve catering in the Railways inter-alia include: (i) Introduction of station based E-Catering at all A1 and A category stations for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice. (ii) Introduction of precooked food ('ready to eat' meals) in the range of options available to passengers. (iii) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities and real time assistance to travelling public. (iv) Imposition of penalties in case of deficiencies detected in services. (v) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services (vi) A Twitter handle with the address @IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

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